



State of Delaware
Office of Auditor of Accounts
R. Thomas Wagner, Jr. – CFE, CGFM, CICA
At a Glance

Working Hard to Protect YOUR Tax Dollars

Why We Did This Analysis

The Office of Auditor of Accounts (AOA), aware that many of the State's School District Superintendents are among the highest paid State employees, performed a data/trend analysis to determine the reasonableness of these salaries as compared to surrounding states and utilizing factors such as number of students and number of schools managed. As a result, these employees may be disproportionately paid according to their job responsibilities and the number of enrolled students in their District.

Background

The State portion of a Superintendent's salary is computed by factors such as years of experience, level of education, administrative experience, and months employed per year. The remainder of the Superintendent's salary is determined by the District's School Board and is paid through local funds.

DELAWARE SCHOOL DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT SALARIES

What We Found

AOA obtained the Superintendents' salaries and student enrollment for each of Delaware's 19 School Districts. This data was compared to the salaries and student enrollment for School Districts in Maryland, Virginia, and Pennsylvania to determine how Delaware's salaries compare to those of other States in the region. The salaries and student enrollment data were compared for the period July 1, 2007 through June 30, 2008 (Fiscal Year 2008) with the exception of Pennsylvania's salaries, which were for the period July 1, 2006 through June 30, 2007.

Based on the chart displayed on the following page, AOA noted the following:

- The annual salaries of 17 of the 19 Delaware Superintendents were higher than the annual salary of former Governor Ruth Ann Minner during Fiscal Year 2008. However, only the annual salaries of 2 of the 19 Delaware Superintendents were higher than the annual salary established for current Governor Jack Markell.
- The annual salaries of 8 of the 19 Delaware Superintendents were higher than the annual salary of both the former and current Secretary of the Department of Education.
- One New Castle County Superintendent made almost \$30,000 less than another New Castle County Superintendent whose District enrolled approximately 6,800 more students.
- Delaware's Superintendent salaries are significantly excessive compared to other states for 15 of 19 Districts. The difference in cost of living cannot be attributed to the majority of these differences.
- One superintendent in Kent County, supervising 13 less schools and 7,200 less students was paid \$14,226 more than another superintendent in Sussex County.
- Two superintendents working in the same county had a difference of 7,100 students and 13 schools, but had a salary difference of just \$2,000.

**For further
information on this
release, please
contact:**

**Christopher Cooper
(302) 857-3935**

- There are three districts that consist of just one school building. Two of these districts had a difference of only two students enrolled; however, their superintendents had a difference in salary of nearly \$40,000. The third district had a salary increase of approximately \$23,000 for having a mere 100 more students than the lowest paid superintendent.
- Superintendent salaries for 6 New Castle County districts range from \$161,366-\$193,000 but the number of students enrolled ranges from 4,105-17,292.
- Total number of schools and total number of students, by District, are as follows:

School District	Total # of Schools	Total # of Students
Appoquinimink	11	8,193
Brandywine	18	10,113
Caesar Rodney	13	7,143
Cape Henlopen	8	4,493
Capital	11	6,179
Christina	26	17,292
Colonial	13	10,430
Delmar	2	1,149
Indian River	14	8,388
Lake Forest	6	3,930
Laurel	5	2,088
Milford	5	4,070
New Castle County Vo-Tech	4	4,105
Polytech	1	1,147
Red Clay	28	15,721
Seaford	6	3,367
Smyrna	7	4,460
Sussex Tech	1	1,249
Woodbridge	3	2,012

What We Recommend

- Administrative costs for education in Delaware appear excessive as compared to other states (including the compensation for superintendents). We recommend that the State consider the consolidation of school districts to minimize administrative costs associated with education in Delaware's schools. Having 19 Districts appears excessive for the number of students and schools within the State, as compared to other Districts and States. (Note: The State Auditor will issue a subsequent report to estimate cost savings associated with consolidation of school districts.)
- We recommend that District Superintendent salaries be reviewed for comparison to other comparably sized districts, to move them in line with those of surrounding States.



**State of Delaware
Office of Auditor of Accounts
R. Thomas Wagner, Jr. – CFE, CGFM, CICA
At a Glance**

Comparison of Superintendent Salaries to Number of Students Enrolled

